



Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

Seneca Nation, NY

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the Seneca Nation of Indians for a Brownfields Pilot. The Seneca Nation (population 6,899) is part of a larger confederacy of Indian Nations who occupy land in New York. They hold title to three distinct territories in the southwest region of the state. The project site is located in the City of Salamanca (population 6,566), which is located in the Allegany Territory. The Nation operates a gasoline station and convenience store on the Allegany Territory, which is also home to a national Indian museum and campground facilities. This territory is a prime highway and railroad transportation corridor for the state.

The Pilot targets a long and narrow 100-acre rail yard in the City of Salamanca. The city has a long history with railroad operations, dating back to the 1800s. The site is owned by the Seneca Nation and, beginning in 1963, the railroad lines were leased by various rail operators, until all use was discontinued in the 1980s. An initial Phase I assessment indicated groundwater contamination at the rail yard. The rail yard site is located over a primary water supply aquifer in a residential and commercial area of the city. Due to the geology of the land—characterized by highly permeable outwash sands and gravels—the potential

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Seneca Nation, New York

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June 1999

Amount: \$200,000

Profile: The Pilot targets a 100-acre rail yard located near the Allegany River in southwestern New York.

Contacts:

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Regional Brownfields Team
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Visit the EPA Region 2 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/r02earth/superfnd/brownfld/bfmainpg.htm>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

for the contamination to migrate to nearby residences, water supply wells, and the Allegheny River watershed is high. Additionally, this site is a large tract of underused land in the city center that is mostly blighted and overgrown, except for one remaining on-site building, the historic Erie Depot.

OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the Seneca Nation of Indians is to protect land and resources for present and future generations. The threat to their water supply is of paramount concern to the Seneca Nation. The Nation accepts its role in protecting the Seneca land base and also recognizes the need and opportunity to enhance the health and diversity of its local economy. The Nation owns the entire rail yard property, and could use the Erie Depot building for business offices, retail or speciality stores, restaurants, an arts and crafts center, or an expansion of the Salamanca Rail Museum. The actual rail yards could be used for parking, bike or walking paths, or space for additional buildings. The Pilot will assess the environmental conditions at the rail yard site and develop a comprehensive redevelopment plan that protects and sustains the Seneca land base.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Conducting initial and expanded Phase II assessments on the rail yard property;
- Developing site-specific cleanup alternatives and cost plans for redevelopment;
- Identifying a redevelopment plan that is consistent with the overall cultural and economic goals of the Seneca Nation; and
- Educating both the Seneca community and Salamanca residents about environmental conditions, cleanup alternatives, and redevelopment plans for the site.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.